

VZCZCXRO8063
RR RUEHAST
DE RUEHSK #0527 1371419
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
R 171419Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY MINSK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 4416
INFO RUCNOSC/ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY COOPERATION IN EUROPE
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 1150
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RHMFISS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE
RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

UNCLAS MINSK 000527

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

KIEV ALSO FOR USAID

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [BO](#)

SUBJECT: DEMONSTRATORS BRIEFLY DETAINED NEAR RUSSIAN EMBASSY

11. (U) Approximately 70 people at 20:00 on May 16 gathered in front of the Russian Embassy, which is adjacent to the U.S. Embassy, wearing EU handkerchiefs and holding candles to protest the Kremlin's support of President Lukashenko. Five minutes into the demonstration, a dozen OMON riot police officers appeared and non-violently divided the crowd and pushed the two halves in opposite directions away from the Russian Embassy. The crowd dispersed, only to regroup a block away from the Embassy, where they encountered a police barricade that they could not penetrate. The demonstrators lit candles and placed them at the OMON officers' feet, followed by BKGB plainclothes officers who stomped out the candles. OMON officers then surrounded the demonstrators and arrested 18 of them, including three minors. None of those arrested were charged and were released an hour later.

12. (SBU) Poloff on site witnessed the first dispersal of the demonstration at 20:05 and was told that the police had permission to arrest at will. OMON buses were located in various places surrounding the demonstration site, but the OMON presence was smaller than usual. BKGB and independent media presence was large and both groups had their cameramen in the crowd. Photos of the demonstration can be found on www.charter97.org.

KROL